

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 086137

65-60

ORIGIN OES-04

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 PRS-01 PA-01 MC-02

ERDA-05 H-02 PM-03 ACDA-05 CIAE-00 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 EB-07 NRC-05 DODE-00 USIA-06 FEA-01

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TO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY

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AMEMBASSY LONDON

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PASS DR. RAY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TECH, AF

SUBJECT:SUPPLY OF HIGHLY ENRICHED URANIUM TO SOUTH AFRICA

1. WASHINGTON POST OF APRIL 14 CARRIED FRONT-PAGE STORY
BY PETER O'TOOLE CAPTIONED "S.AFRICA GETS A-BOMB TYPE
U.S. URANIUM." STORY WAS BASED ON PRESS RELEASE BY
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PAGE 02 STATE 086137

CONGRESSMAN LES ASPIN (D-WIS.) AND INDICATES THAT U.S.

HAD SENT 97 POUNDS OF HIGHLY ENRICHED URANIUM TO SOUTH AFRICA OVER PAST YEAR ("ENOUGH TO MAKE SEVEN ATOMIC BOMBS"). COMMENT: THIS STATEMENT IS APPARENTLY IN ERROR, SINCE CURRENT NET RPT NET INVENTORY OF HIGHLY ENRICHED URANIUM ON HAND IN SOUTH AFRICA IS ABOUT 98 POUNDS, BASED ON U.S. SHIPMENTS SINCE SAFARI-1 FIRST WENT CRITICAL IN 1964. END COMMENT.

2. ARTICLE GIVES FAIRLY ACCURATE FACTUAL STATEMENT OF PEACEFUL USES OF REACTOR, BUT IS HEAVILY LOADED WITH REFERENCES TO REQUIREMENTS FOR HIGHLY ENRICHED URANIUM IN MAKING NUCLEAR WEAPONS (IN CONTRAST TO LOWER ENRICHMENTS). ALTHOUGH ARTICLE INCLUDES REFERENCE TO NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION STATEMENT THAT MATERIAL IS "UNDER SAFEGUARDS THAT WOULD PREVENT THE DIVERSION OF THE URANIUM OUT OF THE RESEARCH REACTOR," IT DOES NOT INDICATE THAT THESE ARE IAEA SAFEGUARDS. ARTICLE ALSO POINTS OUT

THAT SOUTH AFRICA HAS FAILED TO SIGN THE NPT FOR "MANY REASONS, ONE OF WHICH IS TO LEAVE THEMSELVES THE OPTION OF DEVELOPING THEIR OWN ATOMIC WEAPONS." LAST PARAGRAPH READS: "THERE'S NO WAY WE CAN EXERCISE EFFECTIVE CONTROL OVER THE USE SOUTH AFRICA MAKES OF THAT URANIUM," SAID ASPIN, WHO CALLED FOR A HALT TO THE URANIUM SHIPMENTS."

3. PRESS REACTION TO DATE HAS BEEN RELATIVELY LOW-KEY. ISSUE WAS NOT RPT NOT RAISED AT DEPT'S NOON BRIEFING ON APRIL 14. ERDA AND NRC HAVE EACH HAD SEVERAL INQUIRIES, ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY FROM U.S. PRESS. IN CONGRESS, JOINT COMMITTEE ON ATOMIC ENERGY HAS EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER MISLEADING TONE OF ARTICLE AND MAY ISSUE CLARIFYING PRESS RELEASE.

4. IF QUERIED, POST MAY DRAW ON ABOVE MATERIAL AND SHOULD MAKE THE FOL POINTS: (A) THAT U.S. HAS BEEN SUPPLYING FUEL FOR SAFARI-1 SINCE ITS INITIAL OPERATION TEN YEARS AGO; (B) THAT SUCH SUPPLY IS UNDER AN INTER-GOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT FOR COOPERATION SINCE 1957 GUARANTEEING ITS PEACEFUL USE TOGETHER WITH AN EXCHANGE OF NOTES ASSURING THAT MATERIAL SUBJECT TO THE AGREE-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 STATE 086137

MENT WILL NOT BE USED FOR ANY NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVE DEVICE, INCLUDING SO-CALLED PEACEFUL NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVES; (C) THAT SAFEGUARDS TO VERIFY SUCH PEACEFUL USES ARE ADMINISTERED BY THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY (IAEA) UNDER A TRILATERAL AGREEMENT FIRST APPROVED BY THE IAEA BOARD OF GOVERNORS IN 1965, AND (D) WE HAVE FULL CONFIDENCE IN THE ABILITY OF THESE SAFEGUARDS TO PREVENT THE DIVERSION OF NUCLEAR MATERIAL BY THE RISK

OF EARLY DETECTION. KISSINGER

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Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Draft Date: 15 APR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MorefiRH
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
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Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Margaret P. Grafeld
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To: PRETORIA HELSINKI
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